Journal of the Royal Society of Arts

NO. 4941 FRIDAY, 24TH DECEMBER, 1954 VOL. CIII

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, 29TH DECEMBER, at 2.30 p.m. DR. MANN JUVENILE LECTURE. '*Spies in Fact and Fiction*', by Bernard Newman. (The lecture will be illustrated with lantern slides. Admission by special ticket only.)

MONDAY, 3RD JANUARY, at 6.30 p.m. FILM EVENING. (Programme as announced in the last issue of the *Journal*.)

WEDNESDAY, 5TH JANUARY, at 2.30 p.m. DR. MANN JUVENILE LECTURE. '*Some Mysteries of Metals*', by Professor E. N. da C. Andrade, D.Sc., Ph.D., LL.D., F.R.S. (The lecture will be illustrated with experiments. Admission by special ticket only.)

THURSDAY, 6TH JANUARY, at 5.15 p.m. COMMONWEALTH SECTION. HENRY MORLEY LECTURE. '*The Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia*', by R. L. Prain, O.B.E., Chairman, Rhodesian Selection Trust Group of Companies. Sir Gilbert Rennie, G.B.E., K.C.M.G., M.C., High Commissioner for the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, will preside. (Tea will be served from 4.30 p.m.)

WEDNESDAY, 19TH JANUARY, at 2.30 p.m. CADMAN MEMORIAL LECTURE. '*Research in the Coal Industry*', by W. Idris Jones, C.B.E., B.Sc., Ph.D., Director-General of Research, National Coal Board. The Hon. L. W. Joynson-Hicks, M.A., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Fuel and Power, will preside.

THURSDAY, 20TH JANUARY, at 6.30 p.m. DISCUSSION MEETING. (See notice below.)

EVENING DISCUSSION MEETING

Fellows are reminded that a special informal discussion meeting, details of which were given in the *Journal* on the 26th November, will take place on Thursday, 20th January, at 6.30 p.m. The subject for discussion is 'Television—Friend or Foe'. As this is to be an experiment in a new type of meeting, it will only be repeated if it proves successful. Fellows who are interested, therefore, are urged to attend if possible.

BICENTENARY RECEPTION

His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, President of the Society, attended the Society's Reception at St. James's Palace on the evening of

15th December. The Reception was the culmination of the celebrations held in connection with the Bicentenary.

Although there was fog, over a thousand guests were present, and they were received on their arrival by the Chairman of Council, Mr. E. Munro Runtz, and Mrs. Runtz, and the immediate past Chairman of Council, Lord Radnor, and Lady Radnor.

The President was received at the Sovereign's Entrance by the Chairman, with Lord Radnor, Sir Edward Crowe and Sir Ernest Goodale, past Chairmen of the Council of the Society, and the Secretary, and escorted by them to the Council Chamber where a number of guests and Fellows of the Society were presented to His Royal Highness. These included the Acting High Commissioner for New Zealand, the Lord Chamberlain and Lady Scarbrough, the Mayor and Mayoress of Westminster, and Members of the Council and their ladies.

Recipients of the Society's major awards and the representatives of a number of kindred Societies were also presented.

In addition to Sir Alfred Bossom, Bt., F.R.I.B.A., M.P., President of the Modular Society, and Sir Francis Meynell, Master of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry, both of whom were presented as Members of Council of the Society, they included:

Sir Colin Anderson, *Bicentenary Medallist, also Chairman, Royal College of Art, and President, Design & Industries Association.*
Mr. Misha Black, *President, Society of Industrial Artists.*
The Right Honble. Lord Brabazon of Tara, P.C., G.B.E., *President, Royal Institution of Great Britain.*
Sir Russell Brain, *President, Royal College of Physicians.*
Sir Sydney Camm, C.B.E., *President, Royal Aeronautical Society.*
Sir William Reid Dick, R.A., *Albert Medallist.*
Sir Alexander Fleming, F.R.S., *Albert Medallist.*
Sir Lancelot Graham, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., *Chairman, Royal Empire Society.*
Sir Ben Lockspeiser, K.C.B., F.R.S., *Secretary, Department of Scientific & Industrial Research.*
General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall, K.C.B., D.S.O., *President, Royal Geographical Society.*
Professor H. S. W. Massey, F.R.S., *President, The Physical Society.*
Mr. B. Sinkinson, *President, Royal Photographic Society.*
Mr. D. M. Watson, *President, Institution of Civil Engineers.*
Sir John Woodhead, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., *Chairman, East India Association.*
Mr. W. J. Worboys, *Chairman, Council of Industrial Design.*
Mr. V. E. Yarsley, *President, Plastics Institute.*

After these presentations had been made, the President entered the Throne Room. He then walked amongst the guests talking with many of them, and visited each of the main rooms of the State Apartments before he left the Palace shortly before 11 o'clock when the Reception ended.

Music was played throughout the evening by the Orchestra of the Royal Artillery, which was conducted by its Director, Lieutenant-Colonel Owen Geary, M.B.E.

A number of photographs were taken and it is hoped to reproduce some of these in the next issue of the *Journal*, which will also contain an announcement about how Fellows may obtain copies.

FRED COOK MEMORIAL BEQUEST

The Society has received a bequest of £1,000 from the late Mrs. Grace Cook, in memory of her husband, Mr. Fred Cook, who was a Fellow of the Society.

The purpose of the bequest is shown in the following extract from Mrs. Cook's Will:

> '. . . to be applicable for the general purposes of such Society And I request (but not so as to create any trust or legal obligation even if such request shall be communicated to the said Society in my lifetime) that the said Society will invest such legacy and use the income arising therefrom (or such part of such income as may be required) in paying the expenses incurred in the delivery of an annual lecture on the Old Masters such lecture being advertised and open to the public and to be called The Fred Cook Memorial Lecture. . . .'

MEETING OF COUNCIL

A meeting of Council was held on Monday, 13th December, 1954. Present: The Earl of Radnor (in the Chair); Mr. F. H. Andrews; Sir Alfred Bossom; Sir Frank Brown; Sir Edward Crowe; Sir Charles Dodds; Sir John Forsdyke; Mr. P. A. Le Neve Foster; Mr. John Gloag; Sir Ernest Goodale; The Earl of Halsbury; Mr. A. C. Hartley; Dr. R. W. Holland; Mr. William Johnstone; Lord Latham; Sir Harry Lindsay; Sir Francis Meynell; Mr. O. P. Milne; Lord Nathan; Sir William Ogg; Mr. E. M. Rich; Mr. A. R. N. Roberts; Sir Andrew Rowell; Sir Harold Saunders; Sir Selwyn Selwyn-Clarke; Sir John Simonsen; Professor Dudley Stamp; Sir Stephen Tallents and Mr. William Will; with Mr. K. W. Luckhurst (Secretary) and Mr. R. V. C. Cleveland-Stevens (Assistant Secretary).

ELECTIONS

The following candidates were duly elected Fellows of the Society:

Albu, Sir George Werner, Bart., Johannesburg, South Africa.
Allwright, Winston John Sheldon Rudman, D.Sc., B.Com., Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa.
Axe, Leonard George, B.Sc., M.I.E.E., Johannesburg, South Africa.
Bailey, The Hon. Douglas, O.B.E., J.P., M.E.C., M.L.C., Seychelles Islands, Indian Ocean.
Baker, Herbert William Willoughby, A.M.I.Mech.E., London.
Barry, Dennis Egerton, A.R.I.B.A., Johannesburg, South Africa.
Battiss, Walter Whall, B.A., Pretoria, Transvaal, South Africa.
Bibby, Cyril, M.A., M.Sc., Barnet, Herts.
Burrell, Stanley Richard, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.
Caffyn, John Espinett, B.Sc., A.Inst.P., Durham, Co. Durham.
Carruthers, Joseph, B.A., B.Sc., Wigton, Cumberland.
Clements, Francis John, Bromsgrove, Worcs.
Clews, Professor Charles John Birkett, B.Sc., Ph.D., Nedlands, Western Australia.

Coombes, Francis Sidney, Faversham, Kent.
Courtenay, Reginald, Abingdon, Berks.
Critchfield, Charles Edwin Mossman, M.I.Mech.E., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.
Daniels, Leonard, A.R.I.B.A., Newcastle under Lyme, Staffs.
Davidson, Daniel Macfarlane, M.I.Mech.E., Germiston, Transvaal, South Africa.
de Deo, Sister Mary John, Letchworth, Herts.
Dienner, John A., B.S., E.E., LL.B., Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A.
Eltham, Ernest Percy, B.E.E., Hampton, Victoria, Australia.
Fieldhouse, Leslie James, Manchester.
Firth, John Alfred Patrick, A.M.I.E.E., Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.
Gunn, Havard, O.B.E., Burnham, Bucks.
Hald, Edward Niels Tove, Hon.R.D.I., Orrefors, Sweden.
Harrison, Miss Lilian Marguerite, M.A., Hessle, Yorks.
Hoar, Harold George, A.M.I.E.E., London.
Joag, Vishwanath Keshav, M.A., Poona, India.
Knight, Professor Cyril Roy, M.A., B.Arch., F.R.I.B.A., F.N.Z.I.A., Auckland, New Zealand.
Lister, Professor Maurice Wolfenden, M.A., D.Phil., Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Luke, Alan Lawson, A.R.I.B.A., London.
Lund, John, Shelf, Yorks.
Marshall, Robert, Barnsley, Yorks.
Marshall-Andrew, Samuel William, London.
Mills, Maurice John, Woodhouse Eaves, Leics.
Munro, Professor Crawford Hugh, B.E., Hunter's Hill, N.S.W., Australia.
Nicholson, Norman, B.Sc., Dip.Ed., Aberford, Yorks.
Parker, Walter Farlam, A.R.C.A., A.T.D., Seaton Carew, Co. Durham.
Peren, Professor Geoffrey Sylvester, C.B.E., B.S.A., Palmerston North, New Zealand.
Schroeder, Miss Daphne Muirhead, B.A., London.
Smith, Gerald Arthur, Wakefield, Yorks.
Smith, William Henry, St. Pauls Cray, Kent.
Taylor, Philip John, Kingston on Thames, Surrey.
Underwood, Professor Eric John, B.Sc., Ph.D., Nedlands, Western Australia.
White, Miss Ursula Marion, Arborfield Cross, Berks.

The following Examinations Silver Medallist was duly elected an Associate Member of the Society:

Rogers, Miss Anne, Gillygate, York.

PERKIN CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

It was reported that Lord Radnor and Mr. E. Munro Runtz had, as successive Chairmen of Council of the Royal Society of Arts, accepted office as Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Perkin Centenary Celebrations, to be held in 1956.

TRUST PRIZES

Arrangements were considered for the offer in 1955 of prizes under the Fothergill, Benjamin Shaw and Howard Trusts.

OTHER BUSINESS

A quantity of financial and other business was transacted.

THE PLACE OF THE FILM IN THE AGE OF TELEVISION

A paper by

ROGER MANVELL, Ph.D.,

Director, the British Film Academy, read to the Society on Wednesday, 11th November, 1954, with Sir Stephen Tallents, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E., a Member of Council, in the Chair

THE CHAIRMAN: When I was invited to take the Chair for Dr. Roger Manvell this afternoon I had to ask myself what my qualifications were to introduce him. I had to fall back on the credential that, more than twenty-five years ago, I underwent a certain apprenticeship to the films. Mr. John Grierson arranged a sort of tutorial class for the members and officers of the Empire Marketing Board. He staged, at the Imperial Institute, a series of monthly programmes, consisting of films which, he thought, might shed light on our problems. How well I still remember my introduction to those great Russian classics of the screen, Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin*, Turin's *Turk-Sib*, and—always a favourite of mine—Dovjenko's *Earth*. He showed us, not less significantly, Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*, Bruce Woolfe's *Secrets of Nature* series, and a beautiful little medical film, less widely seen than those, which the late Dr. R. J. Canti had made with the help of a microscope. Soon afterwards I took part not in producing but in enabling Mr. Grierson to produce his pioneer documentary film, *Drifters*, of which the first appearance at the Tivoli Theatre before the London Film Society has its twenty-fifth anniversary this autumn and is to be celebrated in a television programme on the evening of 23rd November.

Now those are not very strong credentials. They are in striking contrast to those of our lecturer, Dr. Manvell, who stands out as a far-seeing man who for years now has devoted a perceptive, trained and scholarly mind to every aspect of the art—I say deliberately the art—of cinema. Director of the Film Academy and Chairman for the past eighteen months of the Radio and Television Writers Association, he has been a frequent contributor by pen and broadcast to the continual debate on cinema. Many of you, I expect, will have read his Pelican book, *Film*, and his latest book, *On the Air*. You will welcome another Pelican book of his due to come out next spring called *The Film and its Public*. With that brief introduction, I shall no longer stand between you and an address to which, I am certain, everyone in this room has looked forward with keen anticipation and which all of us, I am not less sure, will keenly enjoy.

The following paper was then read:

THE PAPER

I

Every so often the world of learning gives a nod in the direction of the cinema, as if to acknowledge its presence but bid it wait until it has grown older for serious attention as a factor either in the arts or in human affairs. Occasionally someone working in education and the social sciences conducts a social survey

of the cinema on more or less scientific lines, and everyone hopes for a statistical scandal of the kind they are fond of producing in the United States. But we find, in the end, that the cinema cannot be pinned down as the cause of the young delinquent, or for that matter of the old delinquent either! No university in this country has yet even a section of a department devoted to the academic study of the film as an art. Science, on the other hand, has for long appreciated the practical value of the film, and pioneers for over a generation have applied the remarkable powers of the motion picture camera to their practice or their research. To-day, the cine-camera is a recognized part of the scientists' equipment.

The film entertainment industry is quite content to be left free from observation and examination by the academic world. It knows its strength lies in its hold upon the greater public, and it has its own methods of measuring the extent of this hold—the sure method of watching the profit and loss account in the commercial sphere of the industry. It does not like films to be referred to as works of art—except on certain rare occasions when the word 'art' might help to commend an unusual film to the public. Art is suspect by the film industry merely because it seems to imply the creation of something which can only appeal to a few highly educated people, whereas the cinema as an industry can only survive, economically speaking, by making films which appeal to as many people as possible as universally as possible.

It is precisely because of this that the cinema has become so significant a part of our social life. It regularly entertains and, either directly or indirectly, educates a great part of our people. Its values reflect their values, if not at once, then sooner or later. The public and the cinema have always been mutually responsive to each other—in the expression of attitude to life, and in the expression of emotion. When the popular cinema is successful its values, its desires and its ideals are in tune with those of its public, and at such times there is always a good deal to be learned from going to the pictures.

The cinema had the undivided attention of the public through the years 1910 to 1950 though there were times when it lost some of its hold, like the later nineteen-twenties before the introduction of sound. It opened a new, wide world to millions of people, whose vision of the horizon had only too often been virtually blotted out by a view in which the parish pump dominated. It created in the film stars new heroes and new heroines for them with new standards of beauty and personality. It gave them new ideas about what was desirable in life, and established new canons of success. It mesmerized them with the sweep of the moving image; it dazzled them with colour and it shook them with sound. Even in its presentation of news the same quick eye for exciting action guided the lens of the camera. America became the main centre for world production, and large fortunes were made by those whose sense of what the ordinary people wanted for their entertainment was most consistently correct.

This was still the position immediately after the last war; but by 1950 it was clear that television was becoming a formidable rival to the cinema in the field of motion pictures. As the popularity of television swept the United States, panic set in among the film exhibitors, and the technical research-workers were

summoned into the producers' front offices and told to save the industry by making something new for the cinema to offer the large sections of the public who were deserting it for the free 'peep-show' at home. In 1951 during the Festival of Britain the National Film Theatre in London had showed to enthusiastic audiences a programme of stereoscopic films using a system of polarized projection, and soon a very similar system was introduced into the commercial cinema by certain American producers. In September, 1952, the formidable wide-screen multi-projection system called Cinerama opened in New York with a programme which survived unchanged for two years—the same programme as that recently introduced to the London public at the Casino Theatre. The Cinerama system was derived by the late Fred Waller from his wartime gunnery trainer which used a battery of five projectors to fill a screen which was a section of a sphere. In November, 1953, the curtains in the Odeon Theatre, Leicester Square, parted to show us the first film using another wide-screen system—Cinemascope; its origin dated back a quarter of a century to the Frenchman Henri Chrétien's development of the anamorphic lens. The third important wide-screen development was Vistavision, which was introduced to the public in London at the Plaza cinema.

All these remarkable processes—sometimes far more remarkable than the first films devised to demonstrate their technical powers—were the industry's response in America to the rival attraction of television. The use of polarized spectacles proved a great deterrent to the commercial development of stereoscopic films, together with the poor quality of almost all the feature films employing the system. There were also considerable difficulties experienced both in production and exhibition in the exact synchronization of the twin left-eye and right-eye images which were printed on separate 35 mm. films and projected by two machines paired together. Any deviation from exact synchronization resulted in eye-strain for the spectator. This was a further deterrent to the public, although later stereoscopic systems cured this problem by printing the twin images on a single 35 mm. film, which thus required only one machine for the projection of both images. On the other hand, the simple spectacular qualities of Cinerama, Cinemascope and Vistavision have proved an immediate success with the public. Nevertheless, we have not, in my view, seen the last of stereoscopic films in the cinemas, but their development now seems likely to be delayed except for scientific and, possibly, for industrial purposes outside the main-stream of production for public exhibition.

The artist and the technician in film-making are, naturally enough, watching these changes with the greatest interest. The inventors devise the mechanics of the new systems and produce the first sample demonstration films. The producers decide to sponsor this system or that and expect the artists and technicians under contract to adapt their stories for wide-screen or deep-screen in order to attract the public back to the cinemas. Though it is true that the bolder kind of artist and craftsman has always wanted to explore new devices in his art and discover new frontiers of technique (such as the development of perspective painting by the artists of the Renaissance), it cannot be said that any artist of the film had

recently been demanding wide-screen or stereoscopic cinema for the realization of any particular screenplay. Abel Gance, the French director, had experimented during the middle 'twenties in his film *Napoleon* with a triple-screen technique employing three projectors after the style of Cinerama. Wide-screen pictures taken with the help of Henri Chrétien's anamorphic lens, the basis of modern Cinemascope, were publicly demonstrated in the late 'twenties. A device called Magnascope which permitted the enlargement of the screen and of the image projected on it during the exhibition of a film was demonstrated in many cinemas during the 'thirties. The late Sergei Eisenstein wrote advocating that the cinema should use a square screen, leaving the film-maker free like the painter to shape his picture as he liked, masking off those sections he did not wish to use. But these experiments and demonstrations and theories excited no more than passing interest. It is, in fact, normal in the dramatic arts for the artist to accept the physical environment offered him by those who design the theatres at his disposal. Shakespeare was happy to write for the special short-lived form of staging represented by the public theatres of his time, as well as for the picture-stage which was so soon to supersede it and which was developed for private displays by the Court and the noble patrons of the drama. Shakespeare accepted the stage conditions available to him, and incidentally created plays which are, structurally speaking, far more suitable to our contemporary cinema than are the orthodox plays of our own time. In the same way, the film-maker accepts the cinema as he finds it, though he is usually anxious rather than otherwise to try his hand at using an experimental system which has something new to offer him. I have heard more than one of our most distinguished and imaginative directors in this country say how much they look forward to making their first film in one or other of the wide-screen processes. They hope in this way to discover new and exciting forms of dramatic technique for the screenplays they have to interpret.

The film-makers, like the exhibitors, are conscious of the rival powers of television, but their attitude is one of interest in a new variant of motion pictures rather than fear of something which might prove eventually to be a fatal form of competition. They may not like what they have seen of films which are being made expecially for television in this country and in the United States: these are far too similar in style and in quality to the notorious British quota films of the nineteen-thirties, which were made as cheaply and as quickly as possible in order to fulfil the British quota obligations set by law for the exhibitor and distributor. But an increasing number of film-makers both here and abroad are aware that television is another form of exhibition for films and so another patron for the film producer. Television, especially in America, employs film increasingly, though it is true that much of it at present is used simply for recording 'live' programmes so that they may be repeated at appropriate intervals in the four time zones into which the United States are divided. The film-maker's interest in television can be said to be two-fold: first, it is another means of exhibition of films, and, secondly (and this is far more important to him), it will sponsor its own forms of film production increasingly in the future.

We are not concerned now, of course, with the survival of the film merely as

a means of recording. (Celluloid film may in any case be replaced in the future, wholly or in part, by magnetic tape.) We are concerned with the survival of the art and craft of film-making in an age during which the public's attention to motion pictures will inevitably become increasingly divided between the small screen at home and the large one in the motion picture theatres. Does the film as we have seen it develop so rapidly during the past half century possess powers which will enable it to maintain an entertainment industry separate in kind from television and sufficiently attractive to take money from a public who get their television at home free or virtually free?

There is a simple answer to this question. Yes, if it offers a constant variety of entertainment of a kind unavailable through television. No, if it seems only to demand money for screen plays little different from the best that television has to offer in the future and little better in acting and presentation.

II

Many educated and discriminating people who have become devoted to the cinema claim that the film is an art. It offers a new, highly flexible and responsive technique of expression to the artist, and particularly to the dramatic artist. The hard core of artistic achievement of the film since it reached maturity has certainly not been limited to the realization of screen-drama alone: the documentary film, the interpretation of real life through the selective presentation of scenes from actuality, and the lyrical film, the poetic evocation of the living world in sound and image, have added considerably to the range of expression represented by the art of the film. Parallel with these developments, a very high level of craftsmanship has been reached in the expository film—the film which demonstrates technical processes either by live action (often highly magnified, slowed down or speeded up) or by means of the intricacies of the moving diagram. Art and technique have advanced together at great speed since the day when the late D. W. Griffith gave the cinema its first real maturity forty years ago in the film *Birth of a Nation*.

The film has been called the art of observation, an observation which reaches its climax in bringing the audience face to face with the characters on the screen.

As a form of drama, the film has always tried to identify its audience with what is happening in the action. The film-makers during the first period of the silent film soon abandoned the dead technique of a static camera, placed so that it could record all the phases of the action from a fixed distance, and developed the living technique of a camera which moves about in active response to the needs of the drama. It was this discovery of the dramatic possibilities which lay in planning an inspired give and take between the camera (representing the observing audience) and the action which gave the film its technical maturity, and it is well-known that the chief credit for the practical realization of this technique of observation on the screen is due to D. W. Griffith. He once said of his audience: 'The task I'm trying to achieve is above all to make you see.' He used to the full the twin aspects of this new-found dramatic technique of

observation—the choice of different camera-positions and the timing of each brief scene or camera-shot moment by moment as the action progresses. For the art of observation includes the art of selecting, ordering and timing what is to be observed, and this is the basis of film editing. As detail follows detail, as face follows face, the total dramatic expression grows with a fluidity which can either heighten or relax the attention of the audience, holding them in its spell, bringing them close in upon the action, identifying them with the scene by placing them in it.

The process of photography has always been associated with the reproduction of views of the real world and portraits of real people, and it was natural enough that screen drama should develop simultaneously in two main directions which reflect this characteristic. The first of these was the superimposition of screen-plays—more or less artificial in their drama or melodrama—upon the real world photographed on location or the semblance of it reproduced in a studio. The second was to develop the dramatic portraiture of the living world itself. The great pioneer in this second form of film-making—in which Britain has played a prominent part—was an American explorer, the late Robert Flaherty. His films of Eskimo and Polynesian life revealed that patience and a warm understanding of such peoples combined with a great gift for observation expressed through the living portraiture of his camera could open up a great and important new field in cinematography, which would eventually bring every people and every part of the world into a closer relationship with each other through the cinema screen.

These two kinds of film-making became the major contributories to the mainstream of the film, and remain so to-day. The realism as well as the dramatic power of the film was greatly increased by the introduction of sound. However, films of legend, fantasy, romance and adventure, presented without any stressing of realism, and the experiments of the *avant-garde* in France and Germany all helped to increase the range of expression proper to the film, and they, too, benefited when sound put a new power into the hands of the artist. Spoken dialogue meant that the simple, almost symbolic characterization of the silent screen could be replaced by more fully-realized characters, talking and behaving with the complete naturalism associated in the live theatre with the style of acting initially established by Stanislavsky at the Moscow Arts Theatre. The controlled and discriminating use of natural sound in association with the moving picture meant that the film-maker could vary his effects between the complete reproduction of the sounds of normal life and the studied isolation of a single sound in a space of silence—such as Shakespeare achieved in the theatre when he introduced the knocking on the gate in *Macbeth*. Also, in the careful use of specially composed music the film found a powerful emotional asset. Music played in the cinemas by pianos and orchestras had enlivened the emotional excitement of the silent film. Now the film-maker and the composer could work together to calculate every effect which music could add to the drama, and in addition the musical operatic and ballet film augmented the range of the cinema. In no country has music by distinguished composers been used so well as in the films produced in Britain.

For over twenty-five years the unique technical instrument of the sound film has been used by film-makers in many countries to produce some of the best dramatic art of our time. Like every other art which depends mostly for its existence on the patronage of a large cross-section of the public, it must try to please a majority rather than a minority, and many film producers have been content to respond to public taste on its lowest level. On the other hand, in virtually every country with an established film industry the true artist has made his mark in the cinema: this has been so particularly in America, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Japan and the U.S.S.R. To make a good film involves care, patience, endurance and devotion to a chosen subject over an extended period of time, and it requires in a director qualities of leadership in the control of his technical staff, upon whose understanding and co-operation he is always dependent. Skill and talent and artistry requiring years of development have been evolved by film production industries in a number of countries, and it is this very maturity of talent and artistry which is due now to undergo a double test of survival—the test of survival in the new forms the cinema is at present taking upon itself, and survival in a period when television has a great deal to offer the public in a form of entertainment which, in a number of ways, is parallel to that of the cinema.

III

Television has had little time yet to establish its conventions of presentation in the various forms of production it undertakes for the public. We are all familiar with the fact that television is on its strongest ground when it gives a well-observed telecast of an exciting public event. Its weakness in comparison with the cinema lies in its constant need (especially in the United States) to produce some form of programme for its ever-present public, resulting in an eternal struggle to find fresh material and to keep a sufficient degree of polish in the live productions to make them seem professional. In the cinema we often see lavish technical resources squandered on childish or over-simple stories; in television we tend to see over-simple forms of technical presentation mar the effectiveness of a subject. In the public mind there will always be some degree of comparison between the two media, and it is the need for television to gain greater control over the presentation of its programmes which is driving it increasingly to use pre-filmed material—particularly in the case of drama, where effects of production have to be carefully calculated if the play is to retain its illusion.

Television has already begun to master its main technique of presentation, which is inevitably far simpler at this stage than the technique of the cinema. The screen is small, the picture very variable and insufficiently clear to allow for the subtle use of detail. The production of drama is largely a matter of using varying degrees of shot, and this favours the more intimate kind of play. Television only emphasizes what the cinema calls its peep-show attributes when it attempts to introduce the larger kind of scene and, although it is obvious that more details can be included in the picture as the home screen becomes

larger, it is unlikely that the great mass of the public will ever possess television sets combining very large screens with a high level of picture definition. As far as one can forecast the future position of television, it will always be a medium in which the close-up predominates, except for the telecast of scenes from public events where the experience of what is called the 'immediacy' of observing something exciting or significant that is actually happening outweighs, for the viewer, the indifferent quality of the image on the screen.

Television shares with the cinema the basic technique of making the member of the audience a privileged observer of what is going on, thrusting him by means of the camera lens close in on the action. To this extent television has taken from the cinema its uniqueness as a medium presenting drama with mobile cameras which record the action from various advantageous viewpoints. The only difference here is that the small screen demands a slower technique of presentation than the larger screen of the cinema. But unless television employs films, or uses pre-filmed sequences which are inserted between the sequences made up from a live performance in the studio, it has little more range of setting to offer playwright or producer than the theatre itself. The cinema retains its mastery over the spacious scenery of the world, simply because its cameras can go out on location and take their time in photographing action in settings which put great pictorial beauty or even magnificence on to the screen. Many of the finest films ever made characterize places almost as much as they do people.

It was probably a sound instinct which drove the American producers to enlarge the cinema screen as an answer to the little television picture which was spreading so rapidly in the homes of their audiences. I repeat what I said before: the survival of the cinema in the age of television depends quite simply on the quality of its difference from television. Television is already able to offer its public in their own homes good acting in good plays, and even, to an increasing extent, the employment of a star system in dramatic production. The trump cards of the cinema are its ability to add to these important things a superb quality of picture (which to-day means mostly colour picture), spaciousness of scene and spectacle, a strong sense of actuality in the production of realistic subjects, and fineness in the detail of presentation. The strength of the cinema of the future also lies in the development of special forms of exhibition in which the audience enjoys as complete a sensation as possible of actual physical participation in the screen image.

IV

I will end these speculations about the future of motion pictures with a forecast of the various forms they may come to take as, in the first place, they penetrate further into the field of television and, in the second place, they adopt different systems in the cine-theatres.

I believe that there will soon be four main forms of film-making: first, films for television using the familiar screen size or ratio; secondly, films for specialized use mainly in science, industry or education also using the current screen size,

and, in some cases, introducing stereoscopic techniques; thirdly, wide-screen films with a screen ratio of, perhaps, about two in width to one in height exhibited in a rapidly increasing number of cinemas all over the world; and, finally, in a number of selected theatres located one by one in the bigger cities, there will probably be the special displays of films on curved screens of such dimensions that they fill the greater part of the range of vision of each member of the audience, and so give him the sensation of physical participation in the action. I am not competent to discuss how far the television films will be recorded on magnetic tape instead of on film or whether film-stock much wider than 35 mm. will be used to help reduce to a minimum the effects of grain in the coloured image projected on to the huge screens of the public cinemas. However that may be, moving pictures as we have known them this half century will undoubtedly be replaced by a number of different kinds of film, producing pictures of very differing screen dimensions.

I am not sure at this stage how far it will be possible to introduce to a medium like Cinerama the dynamic technique which the traditional film has evolved. This wonderful giant image which seems to embrace its audience is so powerful in its physical effect that sudden or quick cutting could produce too great a shock, and must in any case be reduced to a tempo which will at least permit the audience to scan each image and take in its full content. A train rushing towards the audience from the distance into direct close-up could be made unbearable, and so, I think, could any scene of great violence presented head-on to the audience. It would seem that the more violent the action becomes the more it must be made, as it were, relatively remote from the audience. On the other hand, close-ups appear quite natural in Cinerama in spite of their great size. After all, no visual close-up can be larger than the one we see in real life when we stand face to face with a man. Close-ups in one or another part of the Cinerama screen do not fill up more than a fraction of our total field of vision. We see every detail of the face, but we are not overwhelmed by it unless some small part, like the human eye, is enlarged to fill the greater part of the central screen area. Then the magnification exceeds that of our normal visual experience and we may begin to flinch, especially if the eye is an evil one.

Turning now to the wide-screen systems which the standard cinemas of the future will use, I believe that the greater part of the technique we have developed on the normal screen will eventually be applied to wide-screen drama. Certainly some modifications will appear: for example, many reaction shots (that is, shots in close-up which are cut in to show the expression of a person in response to the words or actions of someone else) will no longer be necessary, where the faces of two or more people can be seen in very great detail within a single wide-screen shot. The grouping of actors will also be changed to make a satisfactory composition for the wide screen, and certain quick actions (such as fights) can be made to move more widely in the greater space of the scene, and so save the quick cutting normal for this kind of action on the screen of traditional dimension. The feeling of audience participation in the action must, however, be introduced imaginatively in precisely the same way as in the normal film. Only in the case

of the huge curved image represented by Cinerama is audience-participation an immediate physical sensation owing to the image, as I have said before, virtually filling the whole lateral range of our angle of vision.

However, the tendency of the wide-screen systems will be, I think, to look as much as possible for subjects which need large studio sets or the impressive scenery of locations. The intimate screen drama concentrating on the experiences and relationships of a very few characters will, by a natural evolution, leave the cinema for television.

Television cannot survive entirely on the revival of stage-plays, however well acted and presented these may be. The films specially produced for television will, however, tend to be dialogue films, for when the image is small and the close-up predominates what the characters say becomes of increasing importance. In the cinema we have proved that this is by no means always the case: the details of action and reaction are of great importance and add subtlety of observation to a drama, as does the visual atmosphere of its setting. These elements can also be developed in television drama, but the size of the screen and the quality of the picture on the home receiver can never permit the appreciation of visual point and beauty in the manner of the cinema. Dialogue, as in the theatre, gains proportionately in importance, and the stringent economics of film production for television reinforces this. It is well-known in the film studios that dialogue scenes are the quickest and the cheapest to shoot.

The producers of television films should, therefore, become patrons of those writers and dramatists who can create good characters and situations and can write good dialogue. It will be easier for the ordinary dramatist to write for the television film than for the normal film, because its technique will remain simpler and its dialogue will be more prominent. The professional screen-writers, who have tended to dominate the sound film in the past twenty-five years, will probably find that many new writers will graduate to the profession through writing original plays for television films.

Whatever the future holds for motion pictures, the diversity of systems, screens and outlets should shake both the cinema and television from too great a complacency in the fight for the interest and patronage of the public. That is the virtue of competition. There seems to me no question that the film will find an increasing place in the age of television, and indeed that its powers will be in constant evidence on both the small and the large screens of the future.

DISCUSSION

MRS. W. M. CRUM EWING: Does Dr. Manvell anticipate that films will still be shown on the screen as we know it, or will the more elaborate and more costly processes of production become essential? It seems to me a very great pity if we are to lose the interesting films that are produced in an inexpensive way because the audience has become so accustomed to the new screens that they will not look at a film produced for old type of screen.

THE LECTURER: If the chief cinemas of the main cities of this country and of the world go over to some form of wide screen, these exhibitors will need suitable

productions to meet this larger-scale form of presentation, and producers who want a universal distribution of their films must eventually make films suitable for presentation in this style. If a drama is so intimate that it can best be performed by a few characters in close-up and with little stress on setting or environment, then it seems to me more suitable for television.

I think television drama will increasingly be filmed in advance of transmission to avoid the pitfalls of live production apparent now. But these films will not be like cinema films: they will be much simpler to suit the small screen. The cinema film is necessarily a larger affair, with great stress on setting, action, location and fine pictorial values as well as precision in the handling of acting by stars and supporting players.

MR. E. A. SABINE: Arising out of the last question, is it not probable that, because of the enormous investment in equipment designed for 35 mm. film which has been universally accepted as standard, any future developments of wide-screen techniques will tend to depend for their operation upon studio processes, and, in so far as cinemas are concerned, the addition of special lenses as well as wide screens? In other words, will not the basic cinema equipment remain the same, but make use of special auxiliary lenses and wide screens for the projection of films which have been made for wide-screen presentation? If this is true, then we shall have in the cinemas for many, many years to come equipment which will be capable of projecting not only wide-screen features but also standard 35 mm. films, be they of present-day production or revivals of outstanding films of the past.

THE LECTURER: I agree. Any change in the cinema such as that represented by the new screen ratios will necessarily be a slow process. But in both the short and the long run it is quality which counts in the cinema—the work of the great directors setting the pace for the others. Time, trouble and care in film-making mean the investment of money, and this means appealing to a large public. Add now to this the problem of investment in new kinds of equipment—equipment for making films and equipment for showing them. One can see the complex problems set the industry by the introduction of these new screen ratios by the American producers. Obviously any universal change-over to wide screens will be a slow process, gradually catching up on itself, as it were, as the economy of the industry, nationally and internationally, allows. Of course, for a long time to come films will be produced for what is still the normal screen ratio. Also, some countries, like Greece, for example, specialize in a kind of local 'sub-production' (I suppose one would call it) budgeted very low and intended only for the little wooden-seated theatres of the small towns and islands. This kind of production will probably satisfy the public indefinitely there and in other parts of the world where public taste is relatively simple.

MR. M. C. LOMBERG: I was recently in Holland where as you know the radio and television system is rather complex. There are four or five different broadcasting authorities based either on religion or politics; the same applies to television. Nevertheless there was a great deal of talk among television producers on the special needs of the television film and the special technique to be used for it. Is there any sign in Britain that there is a school of young producers—or old ones for that matter—growing up, aware of the special technical demands of the television film and, in actual fact, producing films according to a specific design that they have worked out either in practice or in theory?

THE LECTURER: I do not know of any training school for this kind of production in Britain. It is difficult to achieve much in quality with a shooting schedule of two or three days for a film lasting all but half-an-hour. The concentration is on dialogue scenes and close shots and quality depends almost entirely on the script and the

acting. The directors of this kind of film for television always complain that there is only just time to get the job done. The economics of film production for television allow no more than this at present, and the only way to improve this would be to spend more money (which in turn means more time) on developing quality in this work. The B.B.C. of course has training courses for its producers of live television drama; but I repeat I know of no school in Britain to train television film-makers.

MR. L. GRIFFIN: I wonder if it has struck Dr. Manvell that the extension of wide-screen cinema may encourage wide-screen television. The technical side of it is, of course, rather difficult, but it is not beyond the realms of possibility.

THE LECTURER: I do not know if wide-screen is technically possible on the small screen, but I should think it would make television sets prohibitively expensive for the general public. Only in America, Britain and Canada, I think, has the television set been made cheap enough to be accessible to the average household. In all the other countries that have television it is still very expensive to buy a set, though this situation may be modifying itself to some extent in certain cases. So I do not think it likely there will be wide-screen or stereoscopic television except perhaps experimentally. Colour will, of course, come in time, but the cost of this, too, may prove prohibitive for the general public for a while.

MISS H. A. CROOME: How does the possibility of large-screen television relay in cinemas, which is not too far off technically, fit into the picture as the lecturer has described it?

THE LECTURER: I think there is only a very limited and special place for large-screen television in the cinemas—the exceptional event (like the Coronation) or the more important sporting events. I think what the public want in the cinemas is films of as high a production quality as possible—for in the end this is the only place where they can get this level of entertainment. Films intended for the cinemas are, of course, seldom effective on small-screen television.

MR. REX HARTLEY: I should like to know the lecturer's opinion of Cinerama and what life he gives it as an attraction with the British public. During the recent Italian Film Festival, they mentioned that there were approximately 12,000 cinemas in Italy. I would like to know if that is a correct figure. Even if they are mostly made up of so-called flea pits, I greatly regret that in this country we have only about 5,000 cinemas.

THE LECTURER: The Continental cinemas tend to have a much lower average seating capacity than ours, and often they are very inferior in comfort. Cinerama is, I think, a fascinating but specialized form of motion picture; it will only be likely to appear in a very restricted number of theatres in any one country. Its strong point is its physical engulfment of the audience: this effect is unique and quite extraordinary, and it will increase when the process itself is improved technically. The public response to it in the States has naturally been greater than here because it was the first of the wide-screen systems to be shown—it opened in September, 1952. Over here, though, people have been very impressed. For example, some friends of mine who are professional geographers have been most impressed by its qualities and its future in their own field. Its value as a dramatic medium has yet to be tested, though. The vivid techniques of normal cinema could hardly be applied directly to this physically overwhelming form of movie.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why are the geographers so excited about it?

THE LECTURER: They are excited especially by the last part of the current programme —the flight over the United States with one's vision unimpeded. One flies low over

the landscape like a bird: sometimes it is quite hair-raising as the aircraft banks. It is an impressive way of surveying a territory—especially the Grand Canyon! You have a complete illusion of being there.

MR. HARTLEY: Did you feel any physical effects?

THE LECTURER: During the roller coaster sequence? Yes!

MR. HARTLEY: I have heard reports from New York that people swooned in the theatres: they were sick, they were fainting. Has anything so unpleasant happened to yourself?

THE LECTURER: I have seen the programme through twice and the second time the impact of the roller coaster sequence was as strong as the first: I could not look at it. I cannot go on big dippers, my tummy will not permit it.

MR. E. J. CRUSE: I should like to know if the introduction of the larger screen will reduce seating capacity in the present cinema. I have noticed especially with Cinemascope that if you get very close to the screen it is very bad for you indeed, but I have not had the pleasure of seeing Cinerama.

THE LECTURER: Some of the cheaper seats do tend to be lost. But the picture usually tends to stay a little longer at the cinema and more people can therefore see it. The idea behind the wide screen, in the long run, is that the picture should be more dominating—altogether larger than in the past, and so more impressive. One cannot sit immediately under it as you can under the smaller type of cinema screen. But the size of the wide-screen installations naturally depends on the proscenium architecture of each individual cinema introducing them.

MR. E. S. MACFIE: Is there any possibility of using this wide-screen technique in 16 mm. film?

THE LECTURER: I see absolutely no reason why not. It is purely a matter of having the necessary equipment both in photography and projection.

MR. CARL WILDMAN: I should like to ask a question more on the artistic side, referring to the wider screens and their effects on technique. What is the effect on the production and the acting? The lecturer said you must have your groupings, rather I imagine as on the stage. Does this mean that the wider screen will make the art of the cinema more closely allied to the art of the theatre?

THE LECTURER: Only up to a limited point, I think. In the theatre we always deal with the full figure in the stage group. In the cinema we deal also with varying stages of close-up, and in proportion as we approach the player a more detailed and intimate style of acting becomes necessary.

This is cinematic (in distinction from theatrical), whether it be on the wide or the standard screen. As the screen gets bigger the strain on the actor increases, and perfection of performance is needed. Also in wide-screen films scene-shots tend to be longer and cutting less, which adds to the responsibility of the actor.

MR. WILDMAN: I was thinking that possibly the importance of the actor would become proportionately greater in relation to the importance of the director.

THE LECTURER: The actor is always important in any kind of dramatic film. The director is certainly all-powerful in his control of the way an actor's work appears on the screen—he shapes this through his direction, his camera set-ups, his editing. But in the end it is the actor the audience sees, and it is on him that the human qualities of characterization mostly depend.

MR. ROBERT FINIGAN: While the lecturer did say that the economic side is very largely a matter for the distributors, is it not possible—with television using more film artists and film technicians—that there is going to be competition at the essentially *film* level; and that films ignoring the larger screens which presumably call for more expensive processes) are likely to rise in cost as television competes? The public's revenue to television on the commercial side can come in in a greater flood without increasing necessarily the number of sets, because it is not being paid directly. When you take money from the public and they are not quite *sure* that it has gone, they create less fuss than if they pay directly. At the moment there are 4,500 cinemas; and their net revenues may drop sharply. If so, one of two things must happen: either they must keep those 4,500 cinemas open and full to the same extent as now; or they must be able to persuade people to pay more for their seats. Even so, it does seem likely that from the production point of view there is likely to be less money available. Since it will not be possible to put the wide screens and the special stereoscopic effects in all the cinemas, is it not also quite likely that a lot of the more outlying cinemas (which are, we are told, now depending on ice cream) are going to suffer what happened to variety theatres and the ordinary legitimate theatre; in that the cinema will tend to be the big city thing, the big town thing. Therefore it may be, while all this has a good effect on the production side (people will be able to think more about the quality of the film, and the film will be the important thing rather than filling the circuit) there is going to be considerably less money for the people who have actually got to produce the films.

THE LECTURER: The greater part of the returns due to a producer from his production come from the first-run and other major cinemas—the top cinemas and what one might call the broad middle-band of the theatres. I think the films of the future may tend to stay longer in the cinemas instead of changing once or twice weekly, and they may therefore tend to earn more rather than less from the public. It is speculative at this stage what will happen in the very small theatres which cannot, perhaps, adopt the new systems even in the long run—like those on the Greek islands, for example. But in show business, as they say, anything can happen!

THE CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions I shall conclude what, I am sure you will agree, has been an extremely enriching afternoon. I always like Blake's saying, 'the cistern contains: the fountain overflows'. We have had from Dr. Manvell not only an excellent discourse but, after it, a wonderful overflow of knowledge. I am sure you will wish to thank him for a remarkable afternoon's performance; and we on the platform must also thank the audience for an exceptionally intelligent series of questions and much useful information. Will you show in the usual manner that you are with me in thanking Dr. Manvell?

The vote of thanks was carried with acclamation, and the meeting then ended.

GENERAL NOTES

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MASTERPIECES AND OTHER WORKS

First impressions of the Royal Academy's Winter Exhibition having been extensively recorded, this seems an occasion for second thoughts. Is this absorbing miscellany of over six hundred paintings and drawings of the eighteenth century really so abominably hung, as Mr. Eric Newton maintained in radio discussion? Certainly it has been arranged with more regard to beguiling the ordinary visitor's eye than to any kind of system. Granted the need of avoiding the monotony of a too rigid grouping of painters and schools, it might perhaps have been expected, at least, that Chardin's compassion would be compared with Hogarth's stagey humanity, and Fragonard given a gallery with Gainsborough. But some odder juxtapositions are intriguing nevertheless. From the dancing brushwork of Hogarth's *Happy Marriage: the Dance* one's eye is carried, not to Guardi, but to a sparkling Canaletto whose variety is interestingly brought out elsewhere in his London views and late Capriccios. Indeed, it might be argued that painters can hang such exhibitions more suggestively than art historians, if only because accidental and fascinating reminiscences constantly recur in European art. (Who can fail to remark the curious foretaste of Renoir in the feathery touch of the Gainsborough portraits, most conspicuously in the delectable group of *The Three Elder Daughters of George III* in the main gallery?)

What one regrets, in fact, is not the arrangement of the pictures, but the dingy cloth against which they are hung usually, and properly, in a single line. It may be that the tasteful furnishing at Forbes House, which is already being imitated in other galleries, has made one more critical of short-comings in this direction; but it is surely true to say that a decent maroon-coloured material would have given these eighteenth-century pictures their due value. This was an age, after all, of aristocratic taste, and of elegant sensuality in France, requiring the seemliest presentation.

Courtyard of a Palace, by Canaletto, lent by Sir A. T. C. Neave, Bt.

Here, most exquisitely, are several little vibrant Watteaus, and Fragonard's *Fête de Saint Cloud*, the artist's rococo fancy given enchanting play in the feathery plumes of foliage, fountain and clouds, echoing one another. Here, a world apart from the bewitching universe of Boucher, is the tender gravity and humility of Chardin. Here we see the afterglow of Baroque suffusing the decorations of Tiepolo and the pageantry of Guardi, see the grand period of British portraiture, and mark the emergence of Goya in Spain. It is, in truth, an exhilarating epoch, and the last word must surely be one of gratitude to the Academy for assembling from far and near, and most notably from France, so many masterpieces of the age.

It is seldom indeed that a single modern portrait can attract as much critical attention in the Press as a winter exhibition of masterpieces. Mr. Graham Sutherland's presentation portrait of Sir Winston Churchill is not a masterpiece. Yet the painting —which was shown to a small gathering at Hyde Park Gate the other afternoon, and may yet be publicly exhibited before it goes to Chartwell—is unquestionably more impressive than the photographs suggested. At first sight of the formidable figure, seeming about to rise in reply to an awkward parliamentary question, one is taken aback—so powerful is this snapshot image, and convincing the slightly foreshortened head. Thereafter doubts arise. It *was* surely a mistake not to make it simply a three-quarter length portrait terminated by the frame, for the legs fade out just where one seeks a counter-weight to the massive torso. It is, of course, a Baconian device; but then Mr. Francis Bacon's mysterious figures are so insubstantial that the dissolving of any part only enhances the hallucinatory impression. In the Sutherland portrait the device certainly seems inconsistent with the firmness of the carefully modelled head, or indeed of the body, though it is true that the vertical grey strokes over a yellowish underpainting are rather flimsier than reproductions suggest. All said, it remains a most interesting and debatable, if not a great portrait by an artist whose true gift, it may be felt, lies elsewhere.

The infinitely painstaking investigations of American specialists into aspects of European art and literature sooner or later place everyone in their debt, and it has, in fact, been left to the art historian at Michigan State College to resuscitate George Frederic Watts fifty years after his death. Mr. David Loshak's enthusiasm has

Fête de Saint Cloud, by Fragonard, lent by the Banque de France

persuaded the Arts Council to bring a number of Watts's allegorical paintings, with many more portraits and drawings, to the Tate Gallery where the exhibition will remain until 16th January.

There can be little dispute that Watts was the one eminent Victorian who really understood what Michelangelo and Titian were about, and who strenuously sought to emulate their largeness and grandeur of design, and amplitude of form. This he seemed to do most often and successfully in his rapidly executed studies, painted with the vigour and freedom of the sketch for *Odoric and the Witch* or the study for an unidentified fresco made during his early years in Italy. On a large scale, the sense of laborious effort which is conveyed in the highly wrought texture and arduous poses of the *dramatis personae* is either oppressive or at times, as visitors to Compton know, very nearly absurd. Nor need one be surprised at incongruities in a Victorian painter, hardly less susceptible to the manners and sentiment of his age than he was to the Venetians, who confided (of *Time and Oblivion*) 'I endeavoured to make it noble and elevated for I wished to stimulate the mind and awaken large thoughts'.

Perhaps more acceptable to contemporary taste are a number of portraits, several as charming as those of Lady Holland, others with a vague Pre-Raphaelite suggestion in a detail or heightened colour, though naturally ampler in form, and many more possessing an Italianate dignity. Ricketts, Shannon, and Mr. John in his Liverpool portraits evidently learned from him, but no considerable artist nowadays seems inclined to emulate the Titans through Watts's strenuous example.

NEVILE WALLIS

R.A.S.E. RESEARCH MEDAL

The Royal Agricultural Society of England have decided to offer annually a medal together with an award of a hundred guineas for research work of outstanding merit carried out in the United Kingdom which has proved, or is likely to prove, of benefit to agriculture. The award will be known as the R.A.S.E. Research Medal. Heads of University Departments, Research Stations and Institutes and other Research Establishments are invited to submit to the Royal Agricultural Society of England, in January of each year, the name of any member of their staff they may wish to recommend as a candidate for the award. No direct applications by candidates will be considered. Details of the award can be obtained from the Secretary, Royal Agricultural Society of England, 16 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

LECTURES AT THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Arrangements for the first of the free evening lectures to be held at the Victoria & Albert Museum in the New Year have now been announced. The opening lecture will be delivered on 12th January, by Mr. Kenneth W. Luckhurst, Secretary of the Royal Society of Arts, on 'Early International Exhibitions'; the lectures on 19th January, by Mr. Alec Triston Taylor, and on 26th January, by Mr. James Laver, will be on 'English Medieval Stained Glass' and 'The Beginnings of Fashion' respectively. All the lectures in this series begin at 6.15 p.m.

NOTES ON BOOKS

MING POTTERY AND PORCELAIN. *By Soame Jenyns. Faber & Faber*, 1953. 42*s*

No period of Chinese ceramics has a wider popular reputation than that of the Ming, which lasted from 1368 to 1644. If the Sung has ousted it from favour with the more sensitive appreciators of ceramic form, it retains for the collector, the connoisseur and student the interest of abundance of material, clear-cut differentiation

of period, and quality. For it was a time of great technical mastery, with the supply of good materials to a highly organized industry using mass production methods to achieve a great level of maintained excellence rather than a lowering of costs. But even in the treatment of the Ming ceramics, taste has inevitably changed. Mr. Jenyns only reproduces a single piece of celadon, and the *San ts'ai*, or three-coloured wares, receive less than a page, although one of the four colour-plates is spared for this type, formerly considered the finest of Ming. And this page includes the only reference to the export type known as Tradescantware after the well-known examples in the original Ashmolean collection at Oxford brought back by this traveller. The *San ts'ai*, Mr. Jenyns believes to be in origin an early fourteenth century ware, though carrying on well into the sixteenth century. He suggests a descent from the turquoise Tz'ŭ-chou type. But how early is this? The early thirteenth century seems quite a possibility; but the continuous landscapes above a petal frieze as in Mr. Jenyns' plate 42B are later, and seem to be contemporary with the fourteenth century blue and white. Indeed it is nearest to a fifteenth century type.* We cannot therefore follow this argument for assuming an early fourteenth century date for *San ts'ai*. Even so recently as 1944, Mr. Honey had written of the 'magnificent turquoise and dark purple-blue glazes' of the *San ts'ai*, and 'the splendour of colour and breadth and freedom of treatment'. Mr. Jenyns now dismisses them with the remark that they could achieve rare distinction. In his judgment of the type he probably reflects the taste of the current generation, no doubt partly due to the virtual disappearance of *San ts'ai* from circulation. It is hard to see why plate 42A should be attributed to the thirteenth/fourteenth century and regarded as a precious link between the turquoise glaze Tz'ŭ-chou and the *San ts'ai*. I cannot see this earlier than 1500.

An especially attractive feature of the book is the inclusion of historical backgrounds as an introduction to the accounts of the wares of each reign. But, after reading the history of the Lady Wan some people might turn against the exquisite porcelain of the Ch'êng-hua period!

Many readers will turn quickly to what Mr. Jenyns has to say about the enamelled pieces with the Ch'êng-hua mark, which the Chinese call *tou-ts'ai* (surely to be translated 'contrasted' and not 'controlled' enamels). He accepts the grape stem-cup in the Percival David Foundation, two chicken-cups, one of them reproduced in colour as his frontispiece; but very little else. In fact, he differs almost entirely from the selection made by Mr. Honey for this period. It seems likely that this debate will be continued. So too with regard to the enamelled vases with dragon handles, but usually found cut down to the neck, no final judgment has been reached. Mr. Jenyns reproduces an example with Hsüan-tê mark from the Lindley Scott (not Lindley) collection (plate 102B) and dates it 'probably sixteenth century', which is acceptable. But this is not the vase which Hobson attributed to the Ch'eng-hua period in 1923: *that* has been in the British Museum since Franks' time and Hobson seems to have held consistently that it was probably, though not certainly, of the period of its mark, which is Ch'êng-hua. On the origins of enamelling, Mr. Jenyns (like the rest of us) is still in doubt. For him everything turns on the question of the authenticity of two bowls dated 1433, although these are admittedly provincial pieces. He is sceptical about the enamelled wares with Hung-chih marks, because we can only cite eight examples. But after accepting Ch'eng-hua enamels why cavil at these? It is evidently because he is haunted by the fear of redecoration. He does not cite the reproduction in the transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society (1949/50), (plate 3[c]) of one of these Hung-chih enamelled pieces from Ardebil, now in the Tehran Museum. The interest of this (and its fellows) is that it is not a provincial piece but well potted and with good quality underglaze blue mark in convincing style.

* Honey. *Ceramic Art of China*. Plate 110.

The enamelling could be later but, after handling it in 1951, I did not think that it was. The range of colour is the same as Mrs. Sedgwick's bowl (colour plate B). This is not from the Imperial kilns, but I would think that it also dates from about 1500. The one remarked and redecorated piece in the Ardebil collection is of quite a different kind: it was originally a white piece with an incised (not underglazed blue) Chia-ch'ing mark: it was then enamelled in red, yellow and green and a Hsüan-tê mark in red enamel added on the base, presumably in the Wan Li period, since it cannot be later than 1611. The original decoration also of this was incised and not in underglaze blue as Mr. Jenyns states.

The section of Mr. Jenyns' book dealing with the Chêng-tê period is one of the best parts of his work, with the careful study of the Hsüan-tê marked and unmarked pieces in that style, but currently attributed to this period in some quarters. His attention to the pieces with Arabic inscriptions is justified but hardly his suggestion that these are common. I do not think it would be possible to count more than 25 pieces now known.

Mr. Jenyns rightly stresses Hobson's courage and perspicacity when, in 1929, he accepted the pair of vases, now in the Percival David Foundation, as of the date given in inscriptions on the neck, 1351, and the first really documented pre-Ming blue and white. But he does not make it clear that Hobson went further than this in publishing them as the centre of a small group of pieces in this country datable by their common characteristics.

Mr. Jenyns has not much to say about the blue and white wares in which the decoration is reserved in white in a deep blue ground. Yet this type is commonly represented in fifteenth century Persian miniatures. The only example reproduced (plate 45) is unfortunately only five inches in diameter, not fifteen. There is, however, a dish eighteen inches across in the Ardebil collection in Tehran! And it seems a mistake to use the term '*shu fu*' to mean no more than slip decoration of dragons. This term has so precise a significance as implying an official ware that it should not be used loosely. But these never have the Imperial mark in the sense of a *nien hao* as the inexperienced might be led to think by the statement on page 28.

The blue and white wares of the Ch'êng-hua period are amongst the most deceptively imitated and the student will do well to look closely at the two little wine cups in plate 65A. The beautiful dish decorated with 'the three friends' in Mrs. Sedgwick's collection also illustrated in this plate is convincing: but what about the example shown in Philadelphia in 1949 (No. 74 in the catalogue). This can hardly be of the same period one would say!

And so one might go on, following one trail after another started in Mr. Jenyns' richly packed account of the Ming wares. Anyone who does so will know a great deal more about the three hundred years of porcelain production in China at the time when it had its greatest influence both in Persia and the near East, and a little later in Europe.

BASIL GRAY

FROM THE JOURNAL OF 1854

VOLUME III. 22*nd December*, 1854

From 'Proceedings of Institutions'

PEMBROKE-DOCK, SOUTH WALES.—A Conversazione of the members of the Pembroke-dock Mechanics' Institute having been announced for Thursday evening, the 7th instant, contributions of articles likely to prove interesting and instructive for the occasion, were requested from members and friends. The number of rare

and curious objects in nature and art, brought together in consequence from the town and neighbourhood, was to a surprising extent beyond all expectation. Few people could have possibly imagined that such a collection could be made in this remote spot of the kingdom. From the peer to the humblest artisan, almost everybody had some article of interest to produce. The science of astronomy was illustrated with globes, an orrery, a monster chart of the heavens, diagrams of the direct and retrograde courses of the planets amongst the fixed stars, a magnificent daguerreotype of the moon, &c., &c. The science of geology had its illustrative models, specimens of various strata, rich and rare minerals, ores, &c. Natural history had its stuffed birds and reptiles, preserved specimens of the serpent tribe, insects, fishes, shells, corals, &c. Universal history was illustrated by ancient and modern coins and medals, and various antiquities from all parts of the globe. The wonders of the microscope were exhibited, and that beautiful instrument the stereoscope was produced and explained.

Exquisitely executed models of naval architecture were in abundance. An excellent collection of photographs and nature prints contributed by the Society of Arts attracted, however, the principal share of attention. There were also some remarkably fine photographs contributed by the Earl of Cawdor. Beautiful specimens of needlework, embroidery, wax flowers, and ornamental leatherwork, were furnished by ladies. The gratifying result of the variety and tastefulness of the display was, that by general request the hall was kept open for three days longer, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., when crowds of visitors of all ranks assembled; and the trifling charge for admission to non-members (6*d.* each) not only liquidated all expenses, but left a handsome balance in the hands of the committee. The experiment is well worth imitation in other small towns. It has decidedly raised the character of the Institute in the estimation of this and the adjoining counties.

Some Activities of Other Societies and Organizations

MEETINGS

WED. 29 DEC. Mechanical Engineers, Institution of, 1 Birdcage Walk, Westminster, S.W.1. 6.45 p.m. *Gaps in the Knowledge of Applied Mechanics.*

THURS. 30 DEC. Plastics Institute at the Wellcome Research Institution, 183-193 Euston Road, N.W.1. 2.30 p.m. Christmas Lecture for young people. Dr. J. C. Swallow: *The Wonders of Plastics.*

FRI. 31 DEC. Mechanical Engineers, Institution of, 1 Birdcage Walk, Westminster S.W.1. 5.30 p.m. J. S. Turnbull: *Development of the Lost-wax Process of Precision Casting* 1949-1953.

TUES. 4 JAN. Civil Engineers, Institution of, Great George Street, S.W.1. F. M. Fuller and J. N. C. Couper: *The Reconstruction of Deptford Creek Bridge.*

Electrical Engineers, Institution of, Savoy Place, W.C.2. 5.30 p.m. H. McGregor Ross: *Equipment of Instrumental Accuracy for Recording and Reproduction of Electrical Signals using Cinematograph Film.*

Refrigeration, Institute of, at 1 Birdcage Walk, Westminster, S.W.1. 5.30 p.m. N. Anderson: *Ground and Airborne Equipment for Cooling Aircraft Cabins.*

WED. 5 JAN. Electrical Engineers, Institution of, Savoy Place, W.C.2. 5.30 p.m. G. F. Kennedy and P. H. Margen: *The Economic Selection of Cooling Towers for Generating Stations.*

Engineering Inspection, Institution of, at the Chamber of Commerce, New Street, Birmingham. 7.30 p.m. P. A. Phillips: *The Application of Small Gas Turbines to Road Transport.*

Mechanical Engineers, Institution of, 1 Birdcage Walk, Westminster, S.W.1. 6.45 p.m. *Hydraulic Transmission—the Relative Advantages of Oil and Water.*

THUR. 6 JAN. Electrical Engineers, Institution of, Savoy Place, S.W.1. 5.30 p.m. T. G. N. Haldane and P. L. Blackstone: *Thermal-Hydro-Electric Systems.*

Textile Institute, at the Municipal Technical College, Blackburn. 7.15 p.m. A. F. B. Nall: *The Preparation and Application of Standards for Textiles.*

FRI. 7 JAN. Mechanical Engineers, Institution of, 1 Birdcage Walk, Westminster, S.W.1. 5.30 p.m. Dr. N. G. Calvert: *Impact Torsion Experiments.*

SAT. 8 JAN. Interplanetary Society, British, at the York Hall, Caxton Hall, S.W.1. (1) A. V. Cleaver: *Using Hydrogen Peroxide;* (2) S. Allen: *Liquid Oxygen as a Rocket Propellant.*

OTHER ACTIVITIES

NOW UNTIL 2 JAN. Whitechapel Art Gallery, Mile End Road, E.1. Exhibition: *East End Academy, 1954.*

NOW UNTIL 10 JAN. Portrait Sculptors, Society of, at the Imperial Institute, South Kensington, S.W.7. *Second Annual Exhibition.*

NOW UNTIL 10 JAN. The Arts Council of Great Britain, at the Tate Gallery. *Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by George Frederic Watts.*

NOW UNTIL 30 JAN. The Arts Council of Great Britain, at the Tate Gallery. *Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Engravings by David Jones.*

NOW UNTIL 31 DEC. Imperial Institute, South Kensington, S.W.7. Exhibition: *Sir Alfred Bossom's Collection of the Arts and Crafts of the British Columbia Indians.*